

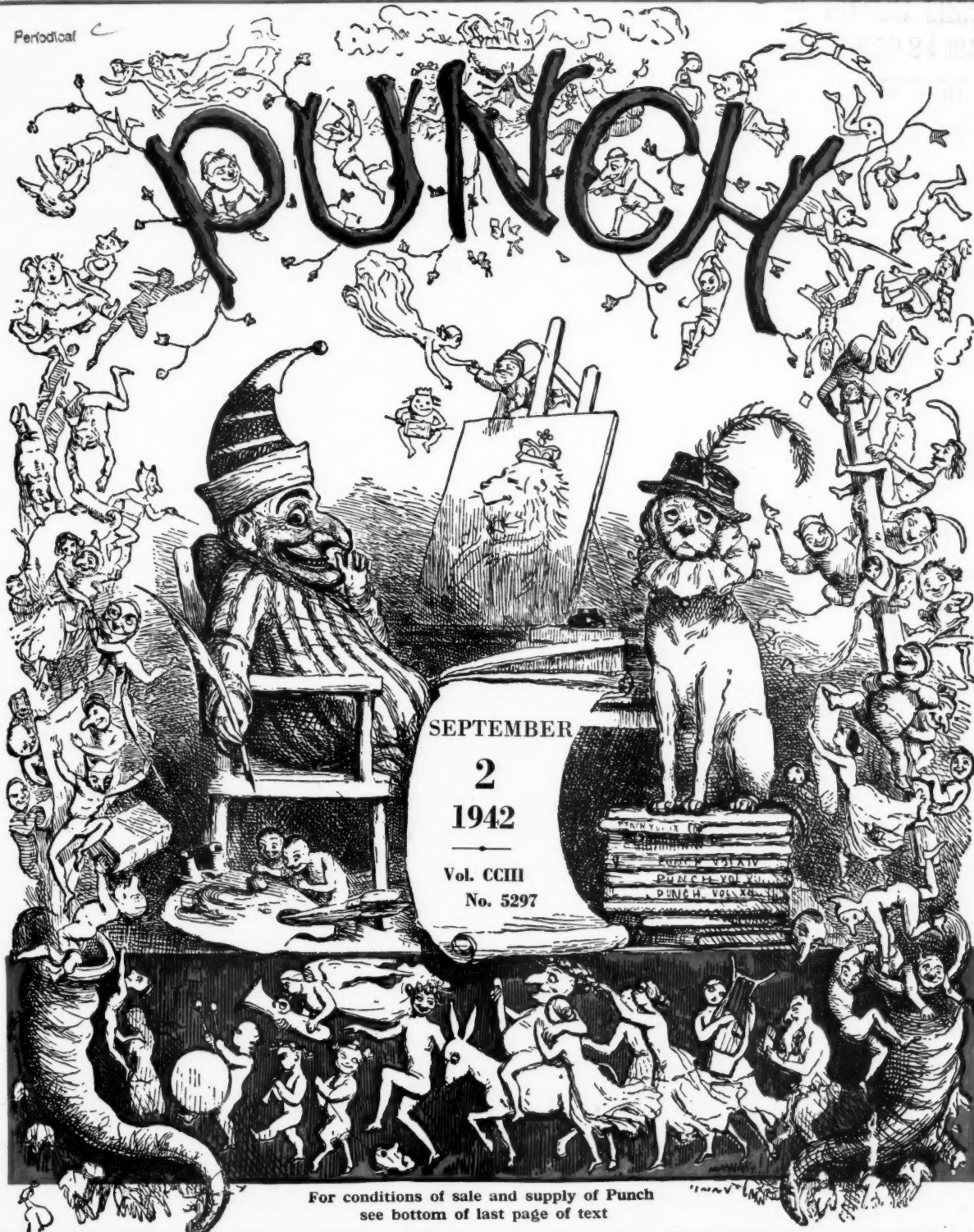
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Periodical



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
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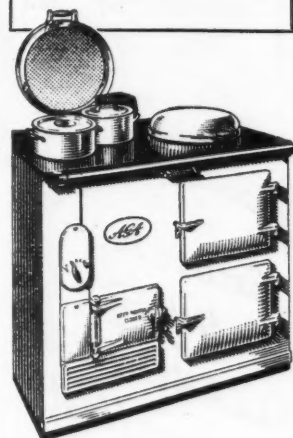
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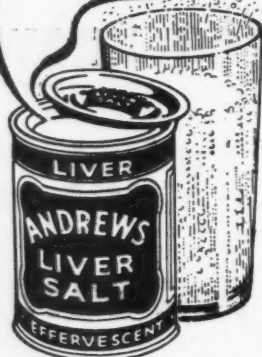


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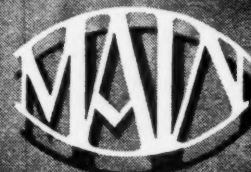
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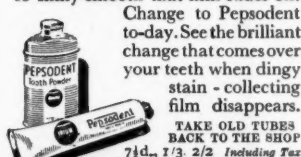
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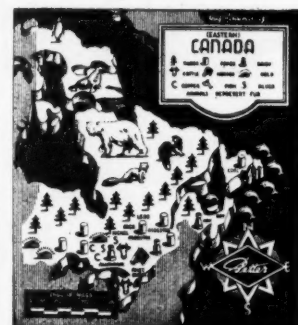
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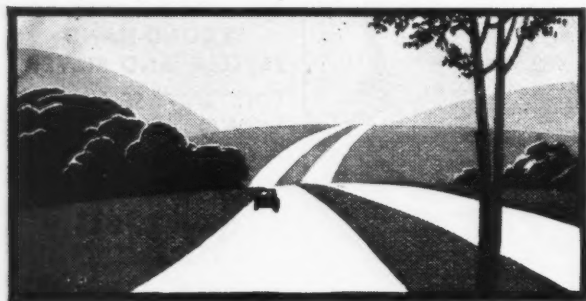


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YOU MIGHT CALL THIS "A GOODYEAR HIGHWAY"

It's a true, fine road—sweeping over the downs and through the valleys—bearing its unending flow of transport, heavy and light, fast and slow... playing its part in times when movement of men and goods is of vital importance.

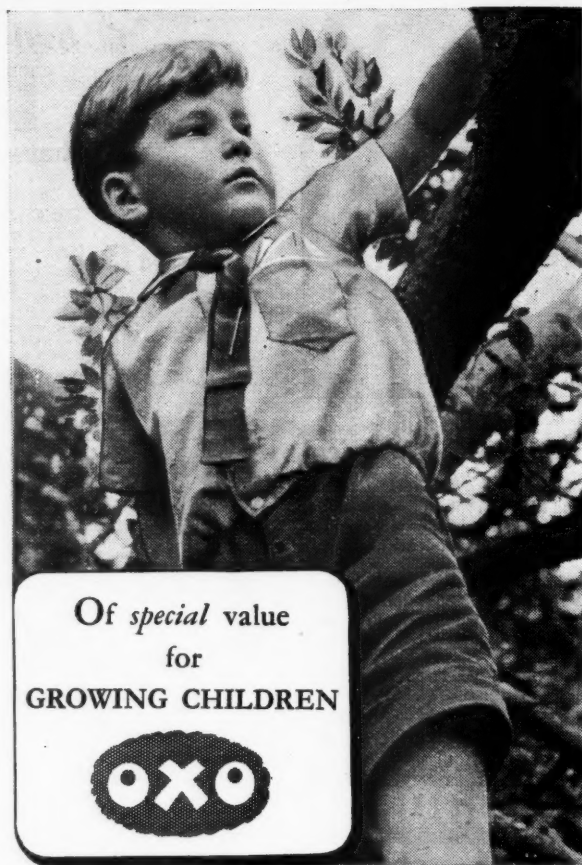
The successful pioneering and introduction of pneumatic tyres for commercial vehicles by Goodyear did much to make the modern highway possible.

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Another

GOODYEAR

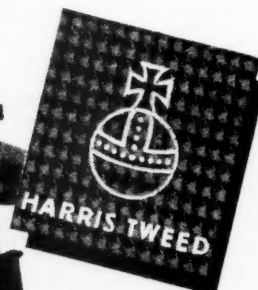
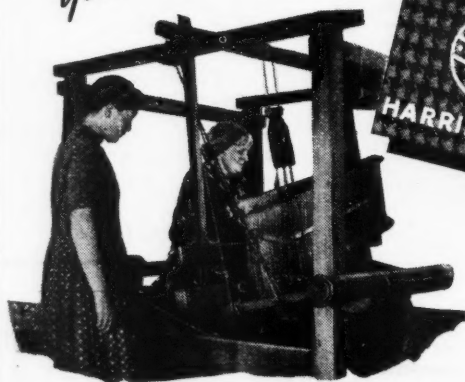
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Of special value
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*This mark is
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When you see that Trade Mark on the cloth, or that Label on a finished garment, you know that here is Harris Tweed—100% pure virgin Scottish wool, woven by hand at the homes of

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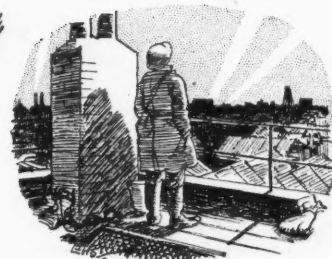
THE HARRIS TWEED ASSOCIATION LTD.,
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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIII No. 5297

September 2 1942

Charivaria

THE Board of Trade has decreed that fur coats made of rabbit skins are luxuries. Not for rabbits.

"The animals in the Zoo have been very little affected by war-time conditions," says a writer. But then, of course, they don't have annual general meetings.

A London air raid warden was seen wearing a German steel helmet his son had brought back from Dieppe. Naturally it was too small for the proud father.

An ornithologist speaks of a South American bird that flies upside-down and cannot see below. It's not missing much, with the world in its present state.



A new surgical camera takes pictures of the digestive organs at work. Alimentary, my dear Watson, alimentary.

Vitamin B has been found in hash. What hasn't?

In a recent cricket match played in a strong wind the balls blew off repeatedly. The umpire would not agree with the fast bowler that it was blast.

A firm was prosecuted for selling trick soap—the sort that leaves black marks on the skin—without coupons. We know the kind. It's for that schoolboy complexion.



"How to Keep Your Hands White in Spite of War Work" is the title of an article. The answer *was* a lemon.

A well-known county cricketer has taken up war-time poultry breeding. Exchanging the sword for the pen.

Nettles, we are told, taste like spinach when cooked and are full of nourishment. Many people will eat them solely for the nourishment.

"Man can devise nothing more complicated than the human form," claims an eminent surgeon. Is it wise thus to provoke the income-tax authorities?

Things Which Might Have Been Expressed Differently

"Mrs. ——— had grown attached to 'Jimmie' (a pet baboon); she is quite used to animals of his size, having been stationed in India for six years with her husband."—*Crosby Herald*.

It is said that Dr. GOEBBELS sometimes broadcasts in evening-dress. Tales are worn.



The Naughty Nineties

"A granny can slip."
First Aid Exam. Paper.

An American model who for years has been featured in lingerie advertisements is described by an artist as a classic beauty. The face that launched a thousand slips.

Flat Out

I THINK I was hardly listening to Abernethy when he first began to talk to me about his *blitzkrieg* on Light and Fuel Waste. This was because I was studying the difficulty of carrying a four-foot wall about with me when I was a fire-watcher and making my *blitzkrieg* on incendiary bombs. It is distinctly laid down in official pamphlets that certain kinds of bombs should only be attacked from behind the shelter of a four-foot wall, and the Germans (not knowing this) are quite likely to drop the bombs in open spaces, where the instructions are not nearly so easy to follow.

I had just come to the conclusion that it was probably better to use a human wall like the village players in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, only, I thought, I shall myself take some other part, perhaps that of Lion, and one of the other members of my fire-squad would be Snout or Wall. I had definitely cast Bilson in my mind (because he seems rather tough) for the rôle of Wall when I noticed that Abernethy was saying something or other about Commandos.

"How do you mean, Commandos?" I said.

"What I was just telling you, only you will keep not attending. I suppose there must be about five hundred souls in this block of flats, mustn't there?"

"Why souls?"

"They're often called that in books and things. Anyhow, we will say that there are a hundred and thirty flats with an average of four people to each."

"There must be nearly a thousand in the one above me, judging by the noise they made last night."

"They may have been entertaining the R.A.F. or the Fighting French or somebody."

"The Tank Corps," I said. "And some of them brought their tanks."

"Never mind. The point is that every lot of twelve or fifteen flats will organize itself into a Commando and use only one flat each night in turn, thus saving immense numbers of Power and Light units in all the other eleven."

"What about their dinners?"

"They will bring sandwiches."

"What about chairs?"

"They will sit on the floor."

"What would they do all the time?"

"Listen to the wireless. Knit. Somebody or other (the leader, I think) will read a good book aloud. Victorian poetry would be my idea, or else a story from one of the old *Strand Magazines*. And the best part of the scheme is that even in the flat they were using hardly any fuel would be consumed except on the coldest nights of all. The close proximity of so many human bodies—"

"Souls," I said.

"Souls and bodies would create warmth in itself. That is what happens in the igloos used by the Esquimaux. Gradually the inner walls melt away, and the igloo becomes larger inside. So they have to go out and plaster fresh snow on the outside. This wouldn't happen of course with a block of flats in London, but the principle is the same. If the Commandos all wore overcoats and mufflers I doubt whether they would need a fire at all, unless there was an east wind. Every now and then one or two who were on Home Guard or A.R.P. duty, or were fire-watchers, would slip silently away. The rest would sit listening or working or eating apples as quietly as possible until it was time to go to bed."

"And how we should all hate each other!"

"Proximity always engenders hatred," admitted

Abernethy, "except, they say, in Tube shelters. We should soon get used to that. And the best part about hating other people is that it gives one such a lot to talk about afterwards. Nobody ever goes away from a party even when they are very fond of all the people there without criticizing them severely afterwards. In this case it would be wonderful. I propose to make out a rota for the first Commando myself, and I want you to come in."

"All right. What about hot baths?"

"Only in the morning, I think. And not very often and not very hot. And every member of every Commando would be pledged to knock a hole in the side of his bath where the Plimsoll line comes. That is a far safer plan than trusting to honour, because it makes such a muck of the bathroom floor."

"They could plug it up with a cork or something," I said, "when they felt unusually dirty."

"The Commandos wouldn't use an ordinary hole," said Abernethy, who seemed to have thought of everything. "They would cut a V-shaped slit, which is almost impossible to plug."

"Anything else?"

"They would never use the lifts, of course."

"Then the people on the top floors would be five times as patriotic as the people at the bottom."

"You can't have absolute equality of sacrifice. Even if some of them died of asthma it would be so many more bodies or souls struck off the ration strength."

"*Animæque magnæ Prodigum Paulum*," I murmured.

"What's that?"

"Only a thought. I often have it, when I remember not to use the office lift. Go on."

"There would be another great advantage in my scheme. In the event of an air-raid before midnight the whole corps of Commandos would troop out as one man, and as one woman, and form a shield of bodies behind which the fire-fighters could squirt and throw sand."

"I see. How many London units would you expect to save in one winter by doing all this?"

"Millions and millions. The target area is immense. There would naturally be competitions between Commandos, and between blocks of flats, and the winning block in every district might perhaps have some kind of medal to wear—"

"Quite, Abernethy. And when do we start getting busy?"

"As soon as the long nights and the cold weather set in. What do you think about my scheme?"

"I think, Abernethy," I said, "that you have a magnificent brain. If there's any justice in the after-world you will be made a Sub-Director of Fuel as soon as you arrive."

EVOE.

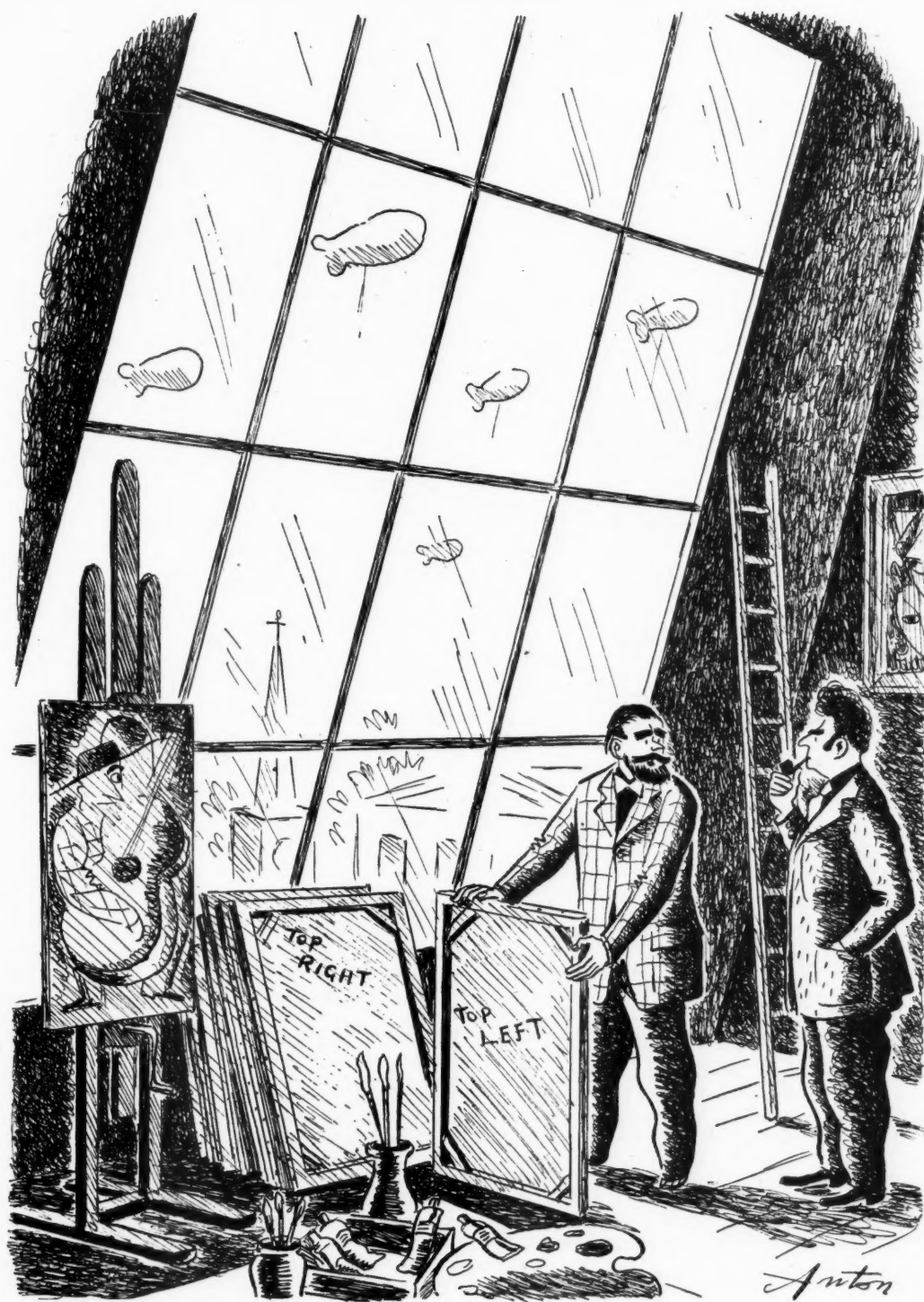
Q.E.D.

WHEN it was eight and six I found
The mathematics hard to do,
But now I simply take my pound
And cut it into two.

"FISHMONGERS SELL CHOCOLATES"

Headline in Sunday Paper.

Hard or soft roes, Madam?



"I'm convinced that whoever thought out the black-out regulations didn't consider us for one moment."



Sillence

"It seems unbelievable that the war's nearly three."

The Stranger

ONE of the peculiar things about life in an aircraft-carrier is the fact that at any moment one is liable to stumble over an odd little knot or posse of sub-lieutenants whom one has never seen before. We are a hundred strong in the wardroom of this particular carrier and when we are all gathered together there in the evening it is possible, under conditions of good visibility, to see through the smoke for a distance of two yards. In the mysterious gloaming beyond all sorts of vague shapes, sub-human or sub-lieutenants, move and have their being, but whether they are the same sub-lieutenants who were there last week or some quite different ones is a problem which will probably never be solved by any means short of radiolocation.

For ours is by no means a static population. Squadrons come and squadrons go. Even when we are at sea strange faces are liable to appear suddenly at the breakfast-table and strange mouths open suddenly to consume the sort of breakfasts that have made sub-lieutenants of the Fleet Air Arm the terror and scourge of all mess-caterers of aircraft-carriers. And when we are in harbour the constant trickle of sub-lieutenants to and from the aerodrome has an

altogether demoralizing effect on the senior watchkeeper, who has the job of trying to trap them into keeping a watch during their brief sojourn on board. And, added to this, there is the well-known biological fact that one sub-lieutenant is, after all, very like any other sub-lieutenant; so that, taken by and large, all thinking men in this ship have long ago given up trying to decide who is really a member of our wardroom, who is sometimes a member, and who is not a member at all.

The matter is not without its grayer issues. There was an occasion not long since when our First-Lieutenant, a courteous host, gave three glasses of sherry in quick succession to an officer who, he too readily assumed, was paying us a visit from some other ship. Only those who know a First-Lieutenant's tender solicitude for his wine-bill will be able to grasp the outraged indignation of ours when he discovered that this miserable creature, this blind mouth in sheep's clothing, had been a member of our own wardroom for the past three days and, as such, was the owner of a practically virgin wine-bill, the possibilities of which our First-Lieutenant, had he known the facts, would have been only too happy to explore.

But in addition to such concrete calamities there is a suspicion, which may or may not be justified, that an ebb and flow of sub-lieutenants is liable to cause an ebb and flow of information about the ship, and consequently all our officers, however transitory, are most solemnly adjured that, whether they are approached when ashore by men disguised as naval officers, policemen, bishops or sanitary inspectors, they are to tell them nothing, not even the name of the ship—and as that is about all that some of them have had time to learn one feels that conversation with the most enterprising spy would, in any case, be somewhat stilted.

Nevertheless a most sinister affair has just come to light which shows that this warning is indeed necessary. It has been reported by Sub-Lieutenant Cathaway of this ship, who testifies that he went ashore and in due course found himself in the bar of the Grand Hotel. There was no one there that he knew, so he ordered himself a glass of beer and was engaged in drinking it when his eye fell on a suave-looking man dressed in the uniform of a sub-lieutenant of the Fleet Air Arm. Cathaway says that he was suspicious of him from the first owing to the fact that his hair had been recently brushed—an almost unknown state of affairs among a class of officers whose personal effects are almost permanently misplaced. And these suspicions were still further aroused when the suave-looking man approached and tried to get into conversation with him.

"Hello," he said, "isn't your name Bradstock?"

"No," said Cathaway genially. "As a matter of fact it is Wotherspoon."

For Cathaway had learnt enough from his Oppenheim to know that one does not discourage or snub Secret Service agents when one encounters them in the glittering surroundings of the haute monde. One leads them on, one fences with them until finally they are trapped into revealing their plans. Cathaway also decided to fence, and there followed this swift exchange of lunge, parry and riposte.

"Haven't we met each other before somewhere, Wotherspoon?"

"Oh yes. Rather. Must have done."

"It might have been at Lee in 1940. Or Arbroath in '41."

"By Jove, yes. Any of those places."

"Well, anyhow, let's have a drink on it."

"Thanks, I'll have a pint."

That was what you might call the end of Round One, with no great advantage to either side on points, but with Cathaway leading on pints. Round Two followed almost immediately. The stranger looked furtively around him and edged a little closer.

"By the way, Wotherspoon," he said, "where are you now?"

"Oh, just messing around."

"Got a squadron yet?"

"Just mucking about."

It was at this stage that Cathaway decided to come out into the open. One imagines that he narrowed his eyes and that a steely glint came into them. "I should like to know," he said levelly—or so he claims—"to what precise unit of the Fleet Air Arm you yourself belong."

The man's embarrassment, Cathaway says, was absolutely pitiful. Twice he tried to change the subject but each time Cathaway remorselessly pinned him down and repeated his question. At length he swallowed hard and said "Oh, just a unit," with a pathetic attempt at airiness that would not have deceived a fly. The reply was so hopelessly evasive that, as Cathaway says, from then onwards the cards were on the table.

There followed a long and pregnant silence. For a time Cathaway supposed that the stranger had been struck dumb with embarrassment, but gradually he realized, with a shock of outraged indignation, that this blatantly unmasked spy was merely waiting for him, Cathaway, to stand the next round. Cathaway's very soul was revolted by the thought; but it was also revolted by the thought that a spy, whose pockets were no doubt bulging with bullion for plying sub-lieutenants with expensive drinks, should be able to cut down his expenses on Cathaway to the price of a single pint.

"Good beer, this," said Cathaway.

"Yes," said the spy meaningly. "Let's have another."

They had another. There was a long unpleasant pause while the barman awaited payment and Cathaway stared nonchalantly in front of him. Finally the stranger fumbled reluctantly in his pocket. Cathaway, resisting the thought that his beer might have been drugged, drained the tankard and strode from the bar.

But the really sinister part of this affair was revealed later that evening when Cathaway got back on board and reported his experiences to the Commander. For it then transpired that Sub-Lieutenant Ferguson, also of this ship, had just reported a very similar experience. He, too, had been in the bar of the Grand Hotel that evening and he too had met a man disguised as a sub-lieutenant of the Fleet Air Arm who had tried to find out where he was serving.

At first it was thought that this must obviously be the same spy operating on two separate officers. But it then appeared that, whereas Cathaway's spy had plied him with drink, Ferguson's spy, obviously an inferior type altogether, hadn't even enough money to pay for his own drinks. And so now it seems fairly clear that there must be two spies working in the Grand Hotel, and all our sub-lieutenants are hoping that, if fate does happen to cast a spy across their path, it will be the open-handed master-spy and not his cheese-paring apprentice.

They are also hoping that one of these days Cathaway and Ferguson will be able to meet and talk over their respective experiences with the Secret Service; but unfortunately in a ship of this sort it has not been possible to arrange that yet.

H. W. M.

Sunset

THERE'S nothing so sad in the world as to stand alone
On a velvet lawn at the end of a summer's day,
Watching the purple shadows fall,
Hearing the distant ping of a tennis-ball,
The sound of happy voices calling "Away!"
A thrush singing. A rose full blown.

Indoors they are clinking the spoons, the baths are run;
Nanny looks cheerfully out of the window at the sky,
It will be fine, she says, to-morrow.
Oh, but the strange unfathomable sorrow
Of croquet mallets leaning on hoops awry,
And crumpled cushions crimsoned by the sun.

They will come home by way of the gooseberry-nets.
No spell can bind them who are young and brave
To this most melancholy hour,
When hope dies, and fear bursts into flower,
When the heart illogically seeks its grave,
Stabbed by incomprehensible regrets.

V. G.

At the Pictures

THE FIRST OF THE FEW (LEICESTER SQUARE)

THE number of people to whom we owed our survival as a nation in the autumn of 1940 is likely to grow as the years pass by, but when their claims have finally been sifted, and only three or four names remain, one of them is certain to be R. J. MITCHELL, the designer of the Spitfire. The public knew nothing of him when he was alive, and must wait for an authentic biography to learn what he was really like, and what were the actual difficulties which he met and overcame. In the meantime *The First of the Few* gives them a legendary Mitchell, whom the real MITCHELL may perhaps be unable to displace, for it would require an unusually gifted biographer to surpass the charm and skill with which LESLIE HOWARD has produced this film and played its leading part.

The story opens at a fighter station on September 15th, 1940, the day when one hundred and eighty-five of the *Luftwaffe* were brought down. While waiting to go into action, a group of pilots gather round Wing-Commander Geoffrey Crisp (DAVID NIVEN), who, as leisurely as DRAKE on a similar occasion, unfolds to them the story of the man whose machines they are now flying. In the early nineteen-twenties, when MITCHELL is trying to design a monoplane to supersede the biplanes of those days, he is joined by Crisp, an ex-R.A.F. pilot who has been picking up a living by odd jobs and welcomes the chance of returning to the air as a test-pilot. Crisp, perfectly played by DAVID NIVEN, is not an historical person but a slightly idealized portrait of a typical English airman, cool and daring in action, cheerful and amusing off duty. Among the many well-contrived episodes which illustrate both sides of his character, the best perhaps is when a Nazi officer resents his wife's evident attraction towards Crisp, with whom she has been

dancing, and Crisp restores her to her aggrieved husband with a smile and six words—"Your wife, my card, my mistake." While Crisp is flying Mitchell's machines, Mitchell is ploughing his way through political inertia

in the world. His wife, movingly played by ROSAMUND JOHN, accepts the sacrifice of his life necessitated by his determination to complete his task before Germany strikes, and he dies knowing that his work is done. The only possible criticism of a very fine film is that LESLIE HOWARD is perhaps better suited to MOZART trying to get an opera produced than to an aircraft designer battling with business-men and Civil Servants.

THE PALM BEACH STORY (PLAZA)

THIS is a light-hearted American version of *David Copperfield* and his child-wife, Dora. Like Dora, Gerry Geffers (played with her usual charm by CLAUDETTE COLBERT) feels that she is a drag on her husband, a hard-up inventor. Unlike Dora, she tells her husband that she could be useful enough if only he wasn't so unreasonably jealous and wouldn't interfere when she was using her attractions to

raise money. But Tom Geffers (JOEL MCCREA) continues to be unreasonable. She assures him that he has no notion what a long-legged girl can do without doing anything, he remains unconvinced, and she runs away to Palm Beach. On the journey, the first part of which she passes in the company of a number of uproariously drunken millionaires, she falls in with John D. Hackensacker the Third (RUDY VALLEE), reputed to be the world's richest man. An earnest idealistic youth, played by RUDY VALLEE with a real sense of comedy in spite of the farcical action, John Hackensacker pours out thousands of dollars on dresses and jewellery for Gerry. She tells him she is fleeing from a brutal husband, and he exclaims that he will thrash the brute, but learning that Tom is a big man, reconsiders this decision, murmuring pensively: "The men most in need of a beating are always of enormous size." Farcical though it is, the film deserved a less extravagantly preposterous ending, and the capitalists at play are so outrageous that even a Marxist would protest at such a caricature.



J.H. DOWD

[The First of the Few]

WINGED VICTORY

Geoffrey Crisp DAVID NIVEN
R. J. Mitchell LESLIE HOWARD

and professional hostility towards the creation of the most formidable fighter



[The Palm Beach Story]

THE GOLDEN FLEECE

J. D. Hackensacker III. RUDY VALLEE
Gerry Geffers CLAUDETTE COLBERT

H. K.

Security

SECOND-Lieutenant Sympson is out all day with his detachment, watching the men work, and the billet, which is a dilapidated dance-hall, is left in the care of Private Geordie (cook), Private Sturdy (potato-peeling, etc.) and Private Lugger (sanitary and sweeping).

Private Lugger was in the last war, and takes a low view of the present Army. Officers, he seems to hint by his manner towards Sympson, are not what they were. In the last war he was batman to a Major Swansdowne, and when anything goes wrong Lugger tells Sympson what Major Swansdowne used to do.

Returning from work the other day Sympson found Lugger standing mournfully by the door.

"Sir," he said, "there's been trouble."

"What sort of trouble?" asked Sympson. "If it's the kitchen range again, you and Geordie must wrestle with it. You've nothing else to do all day."

"It's not the range," said Lugger. "A norficer called."

"Not Major Swansdowne, I hope?" asked Sympson sarcastically, because he wanted his tea.

"No, not Major Swansdowne. Captain Blood. Security officer, he called himself, and he tried to break into the place unbeknown to us, to see if we were on the alert. Luckily we caught him crawling between the swill-bins, and if he hadn't flashed out his identity-card Geordie would have knocked his block off with the poker, which luckily he had in his hand at the time."

"Well," said Sympson, "what happened next? When he found that you were awake, did he just go off?"

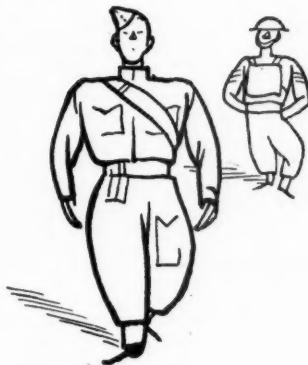
"No. He snooped round. And when he went into your own room, sir, he fell back with a gasp of horror."

"I suppose," said Sympson, "that you hadn't made my bed, or something. I'm always telling you about it. But I don't see how that could concern the Security officer. His job is just to make sure that places are properly guarded, and also that no vital secrets are given away to the enemy."

Private Lugger laughed ghoulishly.

"It was that map did it," he said, "stuck up over your desk, with all the

Fengucco



When John Smith gets away on leave—



a subtle change takes place:



the same is true of his sister Joan—



only rather different.

coloured flags on it, showing where troops are stationed, like they always have on the pictures in spy films."

"The map couldn't do any harm," said Sympson, "even if anybody got into the room. It's an ordinary road-map."

"It was the flags upset him," said Private Lugger lugubriously, "showing the position of all the troops for miles around. This Captain Blood made a lot of notes in his book, and there's going to be trouble, sir. I always felt that map was dangerous, sir. Major Swansdowne used to say to me, 'Lugger, he used to say, 'if ———'"

"Confound Major Swansdowne!" said Sympson, "and confound Captain Blood! I want my tea."

In due course a very stiff letter arrived from the Colonel, but for once

Sympson had an answer that was not only satisfactory, but true.

The flags on the map, he pointed out, were placed there as the result of long and painstaking research. Each flag represented an hotel or public-house. Red flags meant that the beer was good, blue that it was fair, and green that it was below standard.

Sympson added that if the Colonel doubted the explanation he would willingly take him on a tour of the area so that they could confirm together the accuracy of Sympson's reconnaissance.

o o

"Exchange, pleasantly situated condemned house, uphill, for house downhill." *Advt. in Provincial Paper.*

No.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Now, don't forget, we were playing Commandos!"

Guard

HOW dapple-dimpled, how flecked and laced with stars
The lambent night
Is, over the cloud-towers—see, high up there
As heaven is! Coolshine so pours,
Spills so from the air,
It rinses all the curling coast with light
And makes, secret and suddenwise,
A stranger of the sea.

Birds all fast folded in feathers sit:
Such little tranquil breaths
Fall on the air but make no stir of it,
And fathom deep each tree
Stands in a pool of shadow. There nightlong
The owl's round amber eyes
Follow the labyrinth of patient paths
Under the grass
Till a mouse moves, and is swooped on, is swung
Up in a clawclasp, sooner than pass.

Here, statue-still, is man:
With more than owl's wakefulness, watchfulness, vigilance,
That in this soft and scented summer,
Schooled to obedience,
Watches until the morning star grows dimmer.
His eyes unsleeping scan
Always the sky, and the coast as it uncoils,
Lingers over the shingle, curves to the surf-ride;
Now his gaze falls
On field and spinney and woodways, ranging wide
The night, under the antics of the stars.

He watches over the land
That lies all lovely before him; nothing mars,
Stirs there, or blunders, over the countryside
He holds in the cup of his hand.

And so all night
His eyes keep watch and ward: but his heart sees
Fondly his own far acre; his lawn, pied
With sweet leaf-sliding sun and shadow boughs,
Scattered with petal-fall;
And his quiet cool heart knows
A man can fight
Seeing the pippins load his apple-trees,
And pears branch fanwise on his garden wall.

H. J. Talking

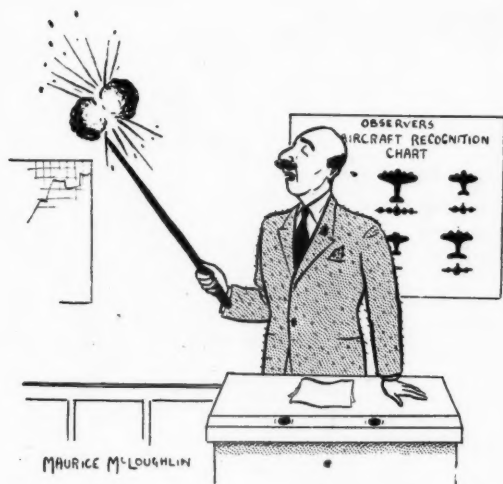
AS a scientist it is bad policy for me to be too affable, such not being the custom of the leaders of the profession, who are apt to verge towards the recluse. Absentmindedness also is essential and very difficult to remember in daily life. To help me I have a series of notices pinned about the house, such as "Have you got odd socks on?" "N.B. No tie," and, fixed on my shaving-mirror, "One side only." B. Smith was once six weeks in hospital through being too conscientious and trying absentmindedness in Regent Street. It would have been only a fortnight but for first-aid done on him by two women simultaneously, one being Red Cross and the other St. John and their methods differing.

I am always very anxious to make my science generally available to the public, and social-minded is what I am thought to be to a remarkable extent. For instance, I put on the market a First Chemistry Set which included many substances, such as cordite and chloroform, for which I had a weak spot, as some people say. With it I gave a book of instructions, this containing mainly things I had discovered myself and, to make it look larger, translations of the instructions into several foreign languages, this also serving to give the impression that I circulated widely. On the lid was a picture given me as a present by Friend, and it was of cows, and fairies feeding them with

"THEY ALSO SERVE"

THEY are brave, these people who, behind the scenes, whether at home or in the factories, go quietly about their essential tasks. Air-raids, nights in shelters, lost sleep, nerve strain, all is accepted cheerfully, for they are determined to carry on. Even when they are bombed and lose their homes and cherished possessions, their grateful appreciation of the help given them through the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND acclaims the spirit which cannot be broken.

The privilege of service to them is extended to you. Will you help us supply their most urgent needs? If you have helped us with contributions before will you please help us again? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber? Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



"... and here, the burst of a 3.7 anti-aircraft shell at 8,500 feet."

mushrooms, and altogether was a very beautiful picture, having been intended in the first place for a jig-saw puzzle, but the painter being so pleased with it he could not bear it to be cut up.

As a consequence of this first chemistry set I was asked to design a game which combined amusement with instruction. I invented a game called "Peero" which was intended to teach all about the House of Lords. Each player threw the dice in turn. One made him a baron, two made him a viscount, three made him an earl, four made him a marquess, five made him a duke and six made him an archbishop and winner of the kitty. We were very fortunate, as after a bit a magistrate ruled that it was a game of chance and not of skill, this enabling us to announce that it was now a vice and would cost 6d. more.

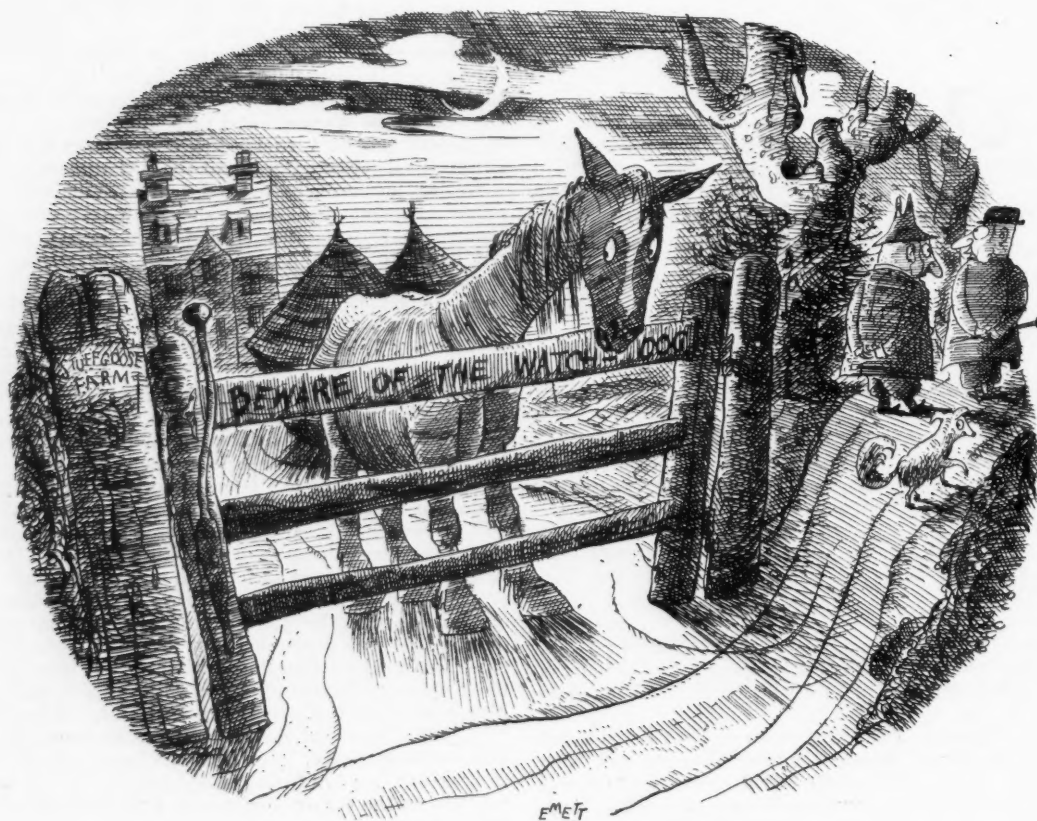
Another way in which I try to make my science public and not private is by issuing warnings. Once every three months a reporter calls on me, and through him I have issued many thought-provoking warnings, among such being that we were heading for disaster, that the Church was losing its grip, and that modern youth was decadent. This reporter's name was Armstrong M. A.-Smith, he having taken the name of Smith after getting his degree as Armstrong, and being morbidly honest. He did not only report warnings, but alternate weeks wrote the serial, the paper being on the mean side and refusing to pay the serial-writer whole time. His instructions were to fill up the space pleasantly without committing the experts to anything in the way of plot. He had two methods of doing this—describing nature, and conversations about general topics, such as whether animals went to hell. In some ways he was almost a member of our circle, having a standing invitation to sing duets with my wife, she being a showy performer and choosing him because he had a very weak voice.

Once after doing some rather tedious experiments to investigate whether elephants never forget or only occasionally, I determined on a short change of work and became organizer of an Industrial Drama Movement in the Black Country. Among other activities I started a

playwriting competition, but there was only one entry and that was in blank verse and entitled "The Progress of, and Debt of the British Empire to, Phrenology." To popularize Shakespeare and break the public in gradually I devised a composite play containing all the fights, but it was found that unscrupulous members of the audience would look up the text to see who won and then take bets on the result, so it was necessary to let the best man win even if it involved a departure from what the author seemed to want.

During my term of office I had several embarrassing experiences, one such being the kind offer of a touring theatre to perform *Peer Gynt* free of charge, and while not liking to discourage them I felt the situation would require diplomacy. I considered advertising that the play had been banned, that a prize would be awarded to any member of the audience who spotted the murderer, or that free medical treatment would be supplied to any member of the audience who broke a rib through laughter, but I feared that subsequently my credit might fall with my public. Taking advantage, therefore, of their rugged pride in their stamina, I billed the performance as an endurance test, the playgoer who sat silent in his seat the longest receiving a small prize. I had unfortunately forgotten to announce that applause would not disqualify, and at the end of each act the performers bowed with ingratiating smiles at the audience, who with clenched teeth and furrowed brows glared back. Such was the hardness of my patrons that not a single one gave in, and when it was announced that the performance was over, in menacing dumb show they demanded that it should immediately be given again. Hour after hour without rest or food the cast, terrified of lynching if they refused, struggled through the play until only two spectators were left. When, as the curtain fell, these still demanded more, the company, being now in the majority, leapt from the stage and were about to hang the finalists from the dress-circle when I tactfully set light to the theatre, smoothing out a delicate situation by so doing.





"It's HIS turn on to-night."

The March of Time

'TIS a paper which had prudently been packed
With some china to prevent its getting cracked;
Eight and thirty moons have passed
Since I looked upon it last,
And I view it with emotion, as a fact.

In its plenitude of pages (twenty-eight)
There are matters of profundity and weight,
With a soul-bestirring mort
Of intelligence on Sport
Which one hasn't been accustomed to of late.

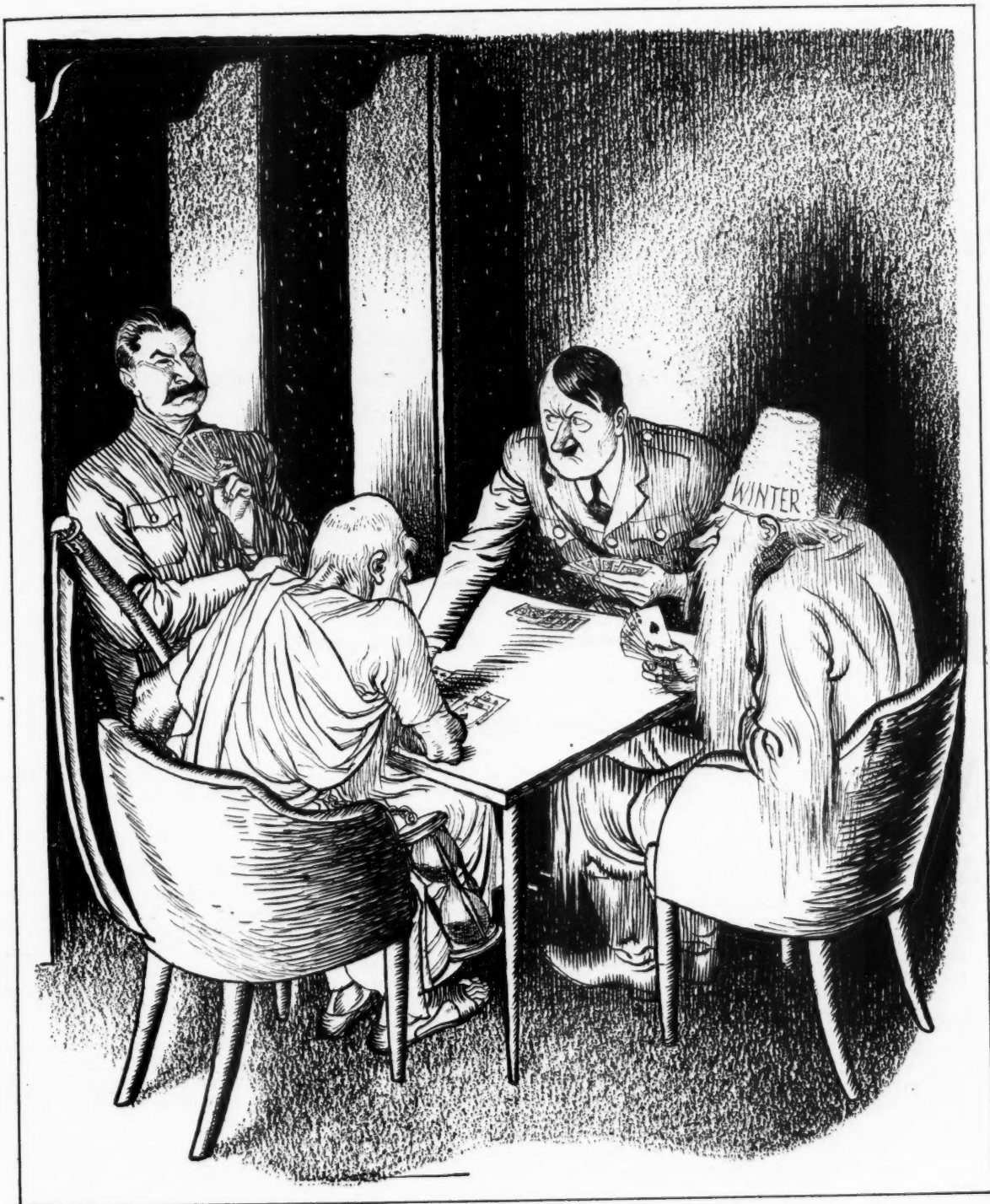
Here is cricket in its dignity of space,
Here is tennis in an honourable place,
And, among the others, golf
With a column on a toff
Whose achievement was a credit to his race.

There are fashions both for women and for men,
(Hats for Ascot was the vital topic then)
While the gourmet could, though broke,
In imagination stoke
On the menus from a gastronomic pen.

They have vanished, they have wholly passed away,
And the pages that I contemplate to-day,
Though of undiminished weight,
Are a skeletal eight
If you get them, and I only hope you may.

And, to mark the evolutionary stage
That we've come to, on the advertising page
If you look at it, you'll read
In the "Wanted's" of a need
For a lady *over military age*.

DUM-DUM.



THE HAND OF DESTINY



"Now, mind—not a word of this to the papers!"

Shelving the Question

"MISS PIN, I should be obliged if you could make room on the shelves for some books."

"Books, Mr. Pancatto?"

"I feel sure you heard what I said. You remember those very interesting catalogues that we had a few days ago, about the sale of somebody-or-other's library? I've been fortunate enough to secure one or two of the items."

"Yes, Mr. Pancatto. How many?"

"I'm not perfectly certain. There are one or two complete sets amongst them, which may bring the total up a bit."

"Complete sets of who, Mr. Pancatto?"

"After all these years, Miss Pin——"

"Of whom, Mr. Pancatto?"

"I must beg of you, Miss Pin, not to shriek at me. You remind me of the third witch in *Macbeth*. (Not, of course, in appearance.) I think the collected sets were of Dickens, Sir Walter Scott and Mrs. Oliphant; but there may be others as well."

"All the works of all of them?"

"The sets would be completely

valueless, Miss Pin, if it were otherwise. I feel sure you understand that. All I beg is that you will make room for them on the shelves."

* * * * *

"I believe there's a great demand for books in the Forces, Mr. Pancatto. If we could spare a few, it would make rather more room for Mrs. Oliphant and Sir Walter Scott and the collection of Early Victorian novels. I've completely filled the dining-room shelves with Miss Edgeworth and the *Encyclopædia*, and the poor Brontës and several others are in the West bedroom, and I've somehow forced William de Morgan and J. B. Priestley in beside the Modern Poets in white vellum—but I do feel quite hopeless about Dickens and Jane Austen, who really should be in the library."

"Then put them there, Miss Pin—put them there."

"I can only do it, Mr. Pancatto, if the *old Encyclopædia*—which is quite out of date and in thirty-one volumes—and the *Illustrated Magazine*, 1875 to

1931—and the *Lives of the Poets*, may all go to the Forces—or perhaps for salvage."

"Let it be salvage, Miss Pin. Better so."

"Thank you, Mr. Pancatto."

"What have you done with Charlotte M. Yonge?"

"Mr. Pancatto, I had better be frank with you. Charlotte M. Yonge, in dark blue, has *had* to go into the bathroom for the time being. And Dumas *père* is simply on the floor in the top attic."

"You will appreciate, Miss Pin, that they can't possibly remain there. Find out if we have any vacant wall space, and get some shelves put up at once." * * * * *

"Owing to the war, it was very difficult to get wood, I'm afraid, and all the shops seem to be quite out of nails, and the carpenter has been called up, and the paint they've sent doesn't at all match the other shelves—but this is the best I could do, Mr. Pancatto. Perhaps you'll tell me which books..."

"Why is your thumb tied up, Miss Pin?"

"That was only the hammer."

"I'm sorry to see that you also have a black eye."

"Dr. Johnson came down—owing to being too heavy for the shelf—the third—or it might have been the fourth—time that I put it up."

"And what is the meaning of the green glass lamp being in pieces?"

"The whole of Thackeray came down when Dr. Johnson did. I doubt if these walls are really adapted for shelves with very heavy weights on them."

"Very well, Miss Pin, then we'd better make it the *small* French tragedians, the odds and ends of juveniles, and perhaps Gibbon, if he strikes you as sufficiently light. Though the word *strikes* is perhaps not very happily chosen. . . ."

* * * * *

"Miss Pin speaking. Thank you, yes, Mr. Pancatto is getting on very well. It was only a little accident with a book-shelf. It came down on his head, very unfortunately, when he was quietly sitting reading."

"Yes, indeed. It's a great resource for an invalid. He's just asked me to order him some more books from the secondhand booksellers' catalogues."

E. M. D.

Private Lives

ONCE thought I would write an article on the private life of a goldfish. The poor thing seemed to me worse off than a canary, which does at least have a green affair pulled over it at night.

I now know that life in a barrack room is just as bad. This, too, is one never-ending and unbroken public appearance, and it must be this complete lack of privacy that makes other people so frightfully interested in what you previously did with any private life you ever had. To wring this out of you squeezes the last drop of personal privilege in the way of intimacy you had ever hoped to retain. Why on earth the man who is under observation as completely as this should be given the sarcastic label of "Private" is something I shall never understand. This is not merely (as a company-sergeant-major once admitted on parade) an "unfortunately chosen" word. It simply depicts the exact reverse of what it is intended to describe. Private inquiry agent, if you like, and even private pathway, but

what the dickens do they mean by "private" soldier?

Take the way a Company Commander peers at a man who comes in front of him: "And what did *you* do in private life?"

"Everything," the reply should be, "which I now have to do, while being stared at."

I heard one man admit that in private life he was an automatic machine minder, which evoked from the O.C. a loud squeak: "Good heavens! Were you one of those fellows who gave people change so that they could play on a lot of ruddy pin-tables?"

I consider this gave the fellow an opening which he should have taken by explaining that an automatic machine "minder" is merely a man who "minds" automatic machines in the same way that nice people mind their own business. When passing through a factory, for example, which is humming with rapping hammers and buzzing wheels, they are not goaded by curiosity into moistening a finger and testing the cutting-edge of a circular saw in motion. These are the people who "mind" automatic machines, though they might more logically be called finger minders.

Another man said he was a precision grinder, which called forth the reply: "You just sit down, I suppose, all day and grind things?" To this the man made the swift retort "Precisely." And few of us could have improved on that at short notice. Though a precision grinder might, of course, be

a chap who carries out to the letter the instructions of his dentist, and actually does take forty-seven bites to the mouthful. In any case, what has your past got to do with the Army? It makes no use of any previous experience you had, except to say "That was all right in civvy street, but we will now see how you get on doing something for which you are totally unsuited. *You are in the Army now.*"

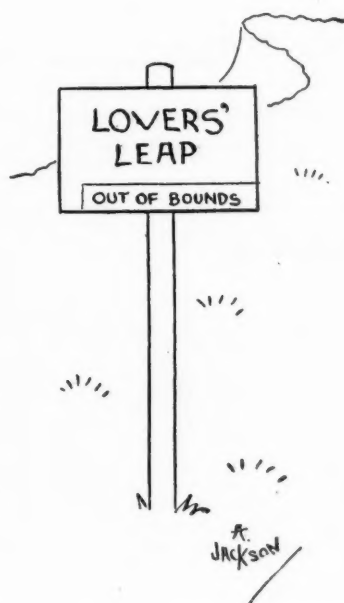
One result is that people claim to be something they are not. One man I know put himself down at the attestation-table as a surgical boot-maker, whereas he was really manager to a firm which sold shakers for vinegar bottles to fried-fish shops. He did this not only to boost himself for the benefit of the next people in the queue, who were trying to hear his answers, but because he thought it gave him a seven-to-four chance of being employed in the Army to look after the blankets at a gas school. And I do not dispute it.

I even knew of one chap who spread the report that he had been a member of Max Rugano's band. This caused a terrific stir, but when he had been rescued from employment on potato-peeling and given his choice of any instrument available to the regimental swing six, he explained that all he ever played for Rugano was the triangle—the eternal triangle at that, and only one corner of it; Rugano having run off with his wife. He said he was sorry if his attempt at ironic humour had been misinterpreted, and was returned to the potato-peeling.

The people who really can do things keep quiet about them, because if their talent is discovered they are detailed to give up all their spare time without payment or thanks and at marked personal inconvenience; whereas if (like Rugano's friend) they have no talents their spare time remains entirely their own.

A man who could make lightning studies in crayon, and who was so misguided as to demonstrate his skill, was actually taken off a draft to his own intense annoyance (for he had always wanted to see the world as guest of a steamship company); the Commanding Officer insisted on his caricaturing all the officers so that the results could be framed and hung in the mess.

As for a man who used to write for a living, he would be most foolish to disclose this. He would be "just the man to keep the War Diary." And it is far more fun if nobody has any idea *what* you did before the war; then you can describe the funny people you find about you, providing you take care not to sign what you write. Like this.



suitable excuse for its use. If, for example, there is a sufficiency of supplies it is quite easy to maintain (with Mr. Hodson) that the workers like to have supplies piling up behind them or (with Mr. Greenbaum) that the workers like to feel that supplies are piling up behind somebody else. Bottle-necks can easily be eliminated if one takes the trouble not to read the newspapers.

4. *I have heard that young workers (mere boys and girls) receive as much as eight and nine pounds a week for making tea in our war factories. Is this correct?*

Definitely not. The great majority of our workers (Miss Chives will have the exact figures) drink coffee.

5. *We hear a great deal to-day about the effects of music on production. What are the facts?*

Music has, by and large, had a beneficial effect on production, but a great deal of research will be needed before the attendant disadvantages have been eliminated. It is not generally realized that large numbers of workers attend the war factories for the sole purpose of sharing in the available entertainment. It is all too often a case of music while you shirk. Cases have been known where women have sat right through the programme well into the second shift: Such people seem incapable of understanding that their seats are required for other workers. According to Miss Chives, 73·012 per cent. of the workers prefer "Deep in the Heart of Texas." The other tune has less verve.

becoming one with Mother Earth, there was such a lot going on. To make a stook at all is fraught with problems. For one thing, there are two schools of thought about the shape—whether to favour the card-castle style with a tunnel, or the heads-to-the-middle kind like partridges. There is some feeling too as to whether one should pick up the bundles pedantically by the string, or clutch fortuitously at the straw part. It is just as well to go away quickly without looking back as soon as one has balanced one lot, before they crumple up in a heap like the cards. But one improves, and I can never tell you how clever it feels to have made a row of stooks. The extraordinary thing is that they look exactly like the real ones one sees from the train and places, little pale pyramids with a shadow one side. Some of the bundles were frightfully pretty too. A lot of mine had a very nice kind of aromatic flower mixed with the oats of an exquisite shade of pearl-grey. Such a good combination, like a camel coat and a grey-flannel suit—really, much more chic and subtle than some of the others, which were garish and vulgar with daisies and scarlet poppies: effectual, mind you, but hackneyed.

Then there is that tremendous moment when you knock off and lie in a ditch. In spite of the sad lack of a blue-enamel can of cold sweet tea the food situation was quite good, and one can quickly become a connoisseur in grain-tasting, oats having the flavour

of the knobbly kind of brown bread one sometimes gets, and barley of Lord Woolton. There's always honey, too, to be had from sucking clover, and delicious bits of juicy grass to chew.

Then there were the most charming field-mice, with mink coats and dark ears, who were idiotic about losing their way; and masses of toads who held us up rather, so determined were they to commit suicide by getting too near to the cutter.

And the cutter! No poor words of mine can ever tell of the cutter. It looks the most ramshackle, ineffectual, muddily old contraption you ever did see, tied together by bits of sacking—rusty, rattly, and practically falling to bits at every step of the three great shiny old-world horses who drag it on its tottering way. But let me tell you, it's magic. It strokes the corn down firmly, brushes and combs and parts its hair, neatly cuts it off in huge chunks, places it all the same way, pushes it into bundles, arranges it, sorts it, tidies it, dusts it, trims it, rolls it, pats it, shakes it, strokes it, flattens it, puts a bit of string round-it, ties the string, makes a bow, cuts the string, rolls up the ball, looks at the bundle to see if it is all right, shoves it off on to the ground, rings a bell, and turns round and says to the man "I'm ready if you are."

Whoever started the idea that farming is dull plodding work?

But then even coal-mining might be quite fun for two hours.

On the Land

WITH considerable reluctance and a certain amount of hesitation I agreed to join the stooking party for the afternoon.

However, both reluctance at leaving a garden suddenly grown glamorous and apprehension at the thought of scratched forearms and harvest bugs behind the knees soon gave way to a sense of drama as our feet rang on the high road and the cornfield hove in sight.

It hove like anything too—a yellow curve hot with sunshine against a thunderous sky the colour of tarmac. Shades of Tess battling with the rising storm! Of Levine, his soul darkened by the elements! I wondered if it was too late to follow what was obviously my true vocation and join the Land Army.

But as a matter of fact there wasn't much time for tuning-in to Nature or



"I've been kept in."

At the Play

THE WAR ON THE STAGE

THERE has been much pother and some pontification about the degree of harrowingness permissible in plays about the war. In Mr. NORMAN ARMSTRONG's *Lifeline* at the Duchess we are in a petrol-bearing tanker which is first dive-bombed and then torpedoed. Steward, wireless-operator, and galley-boy put off in a lifeboat and are lost, the captain (Mr. WILFRID LAWSON) dies apparently of a combination of wounds and whisky, and we somehow manage to save ourselves, together with several officers and men, through sheer seamanship. After this inordinately exciting wetting and scorching we go to the Lyric to see Sir PATRICK HASTINGS's *Escort*, only to be told, soon after curtain-rise, that we may expect to embark at any moment. We are in an armed merchant-cruiser, and the programme gives every indication that we are to stay there for the play's duration. A certain excess of fourth-form schoolboy humour among the young officers chills us at the outset and makes us fear we are not going to like the cruiser's company as much as we did the tanker's. Then a belated new wireless-operator arrives, and we put out to sea with the beginning of the Second Act.

The grim fun begins at once. Anybody with half an eye (excepting perhaps a stage naval man) can see that the newcomer, though his English is as pure as Oxford can make it, is an enemy spy. Our ordeal, therefore, is unsparing. The enemy being so conveniently apprised of our whereabouts, unanticipated aircraft and unexpected submarines hover and bob from nowhere. "What is the matter with this ship?" says everybody, including the specious interloper. Then a perplexed officer with a sleuth-like eye discovers a wireless gadget hidden in a bathroom. Gradually, and with some ingenuity and many thrills, the rogue is caught red-handed—and the play seems over, though it is only the second interval. So far we have all quite enjoyed the trip. It has been eventful and gruelling, but not unduly so. Mr. BASIL DEAN being the producer, we have had some nice stormy weather as well as many bangs, a dive-bombed officer has been carried down from the deck wallowing in his own gore, and the ship has rolled from side to side many times to give us our sea-legs. (We forget whether or no the Lyric has a revolving stage, but it certainly has a see-saw one for this production.)



"But how can we finish the drama?" we may imagine Sir PATRICK and Mr. DEAN saying to one another. "I know!" the imaginary Mr. DEAN goes on. "Give the captain a quandary. Give him a wife and child on a neighbouring hospital-ship which the Hun intends to sink. Give him a couple of Hun cruisers threatening his convoy. Make it impossible for him to attend to one without ignoring the other. Tear him asunder between his affections and his duty, his heart and his conscience. And have a splendid full-scale shipwreck at the end!"

Fortunately for our feelings the mention of the hospital-ship has been so sedulously "planted" in the first two Acts that we do not believe it exists. It is almost with relief, therefore, that we see the captain (Mr. JOHN STUART) ignore his lifeboats and stick to his guns. With a tingle of excitement we see the enemy popping at us in the darkness. With a jump of joy we feel ourselves shaken and knocked about by our own ship's furniture. With a shout of sympathetic rapture we acclaim, with the lower deck, that one of our torpedoes has hit one of the enemy. And with a calm deep hooray in our hearts we go down with all hands.

Next door, at the Apollo, is Mr. TERENCE RATTIGAN's *Flare Path*, a play of the R.A.F. and beyond all comparison this author's best—and wittiest—work to date (although its "happy ending" is rank bad art). The setting here is a little hotel near an aerodrome, and an admirably

drawn and, on the whole, perfectly likely set of characters includes a young flying-officer and his ex-actress wife, a Cockney sergeant-gunner and his Cockney wife on a twenty-four-hours' visit to him, and a barmaid who has married a Polish flying-officer and is called "Countess." Among these, watch the nerve-torn Mr. JACK WATLING and the Sam-Wellerish Mr. LESLIE DWYER particularly.

The opening of Mr. RATTIGAN's Second Act proves that he has in him the makings of that rare thing, a good serious playwright. The three husbands have gone off on a raid. The nice worried little Cockney woman sits drinking black coffee after dinner, aloof from the rest and with her mind on her sergeant. (How cleverly Miss KATHLEEN HARRISON makes you realize, without saying it, that she wishes she dare ask for tea instead!) By the fire is the ex-actress wife giving speaking silent looks to an actor who has come to take her back to mistresshood. And in and out, and in again, wanders the "Countess," who is entertaining a party of the boys next door, having "a good time," and yet conveying to us (another clever actress—Miss ADRIANNE ALLEN) a pang for her absent Pole.

It is the latter charming fellow who fails to return in the morning. To meet this eventuality he has left behind a letter for his wife written in French. The visitor-actor (Mr. MARTIN WALKER at his remarkable best) translates the letter for the "Countess." It allays all misgiving she has had about her own unworthiness. Far less probably, the reading of this letter deflects the actor from his wife-stealing bent. He goes about his business.

The harrowing to which objection has been taken in this finely presented (and till the last ten minutes) thoroughly effective play is a crash which occurs off-stage in the Second Act. It is a crash which does not even involve anybody to whom we have been introduced. The theatre—runs the objection—may be full of sweethearts, wives, and mothers whom the mere indication of such happenings may fill with alarm and despondency. The objection seems to us queasy and pedantic. We have all had three solid years of facing facts far harsher than any that the stage's red glares and red paints can communicate. The truth is patent. The war interests the play-goer just as it does the library-reader, and it is significant that there are no fewer than six more or less serious war-plays now running to crowded, unalarmed, and undesponding houses. A. D.

WE learned with deep regret last week of the death in action at Dieppe of Captain Roger Pettiward, who contributed more than fifty drawings to Punch, between 1936 and 1940, under the name of Paul Crum.



"Blimey, Bert, we're only just 'olding our own!"

Austerity Holiday

ON the river
The wind blows keen.
In the creek
The banks will shelter us,
And we can pull lazily
Between the meadows.
Bushes hang down
And kiss the stream
Swirled by our oar-blades
Into an oily wake.
Over the grass, half naked,
A boy runs to a pool,
And his shouts die
In the heavy air,
Fade in the silence
Of expectancy.
Round the next bend,
Or the next,
There lies something
Which we seek:
Something which we have
Travelled far to find.
In this solitude,
We, the importunate,
Face life's mystery.

Shy-eyed, the cattle,
Coming to drink,
Look at us.

What do you know,
Quiet beasts,
Of the world around you?
What do you care
That these cool shallows
Flow into waters
Girdling the whole globe?
We, fugitives, have come
From where, a browning flood,
They lap the wharves
And walls of factories.
We have come
From the ugliness that man
Has made of life,
To learn the secret
Of your great content.
Here, where the springs rise
Undeified, we will drink
Deep the wonders of
The Universe.

Darling,
I can't remember
When last a day
Has seemed
So wonderful.
What need is there of heaven
If perfect happiness
Is found below?

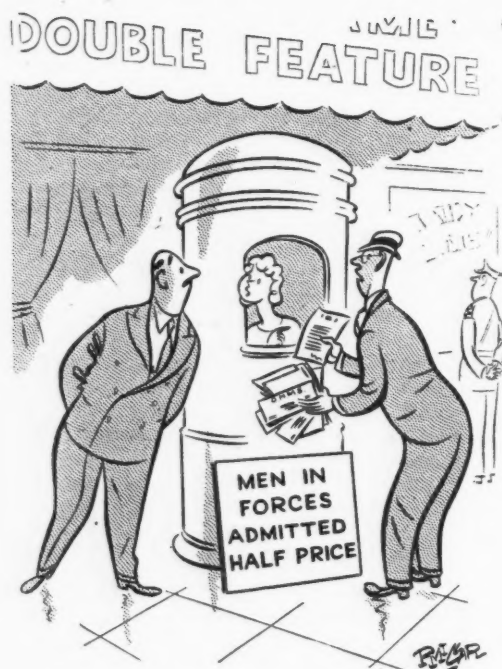
If I thought heaven were real;
If I thought heaven were like this,
I could but ask
To die now

What's that you say, Inspector?
The last bus left
An hour ago?
And there's nowhere here
Where we can hire a car?
Good God! That's what they call
Public Utility!
And what's to become of us now,
Left stranded here
Thirty miles
From home?

Our Considerate Policemen

"THIEVES CARRIED SAFE FROM HOUSE."
Daily Telegraph.

"The Vicar appealed for a volunteer to
work the volunteer to work the hand
bellows of the organ."—*The Star.*
But will it stop there?



"How about this gentleman, Mr. Willington? He's brought along papers to show he's been turned down by all three Forces."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Phoenix

ACCORDING to the legend, the Phoenix was a bird which lived on air for a certain number of years, was consumed by fire, rose out of its ashes, passed through another period of living on air, was again consumed by fire, rose again out of its ashes, and so on. The ideal worlds of Utopian philosophers are aptly symbolized by this bird. Like the Phoenix, they subsist on air, are consumed when they descend to earth, and, being as tenacious as they are unteachable, rise again to pass through the same unprofitable cycle. It has taken Mr. H. G. WELLS more than forty years to find a perfect title for one of his Utopias, but there is nothing in *Phoenix* (SECKER AND Warburg, 8/-) to suggest that he is any nearer than when he wrote *Anticipations* to realizing that the benefactors of mankind are not the architects of cloud-cuckoo-lands in which a perfect organization of society relieves the individual from the task of improving himself, but those who, understanding that the improvement of mankind depends on the improvement of the individual, have addressed themselves to men not to Man, and have enforced their teachings by the example of their own lives. "We will not," JOHNSON wrote, "endeavour to fix the destiny of kingdoms: it is our business to consider what beings like us may perform."

Mr. WELLS used to write about the impending Revolution. With the years he has become increasingly impatient, and now tells us that "the Revolution is definitely here." It has, he says, a threefold purpose, to disarm the old world,

to assert the freedom and dignity of every individual human being, and to release the whole earth from private and political appropriations to the beneficial use of mankind. This sounds very well, but when we analyze the abstraction which Mr. WELLS calls World Revolution we find that it reduces itself to a number of hypothetical persons who, Mr. WELLS hopes, will presently be dragooning mankind according to his ideas rather than those of the current totalitarians. "The World Revolution," he says, reassuringly, "must shoot as little as possible and only when it must. It must shoot with care and discrimination." Possibly; but since Mr. WELLS refers to his fellow-inhabitants on this planet as a "clotted mass of two thousand million obdurate, irrational human beings," and affirms that the Revolution must "deflect the whole rout into a new way of living and keep it there," it is reasonable to apprehend that, under his direction, the World Revolution would soon be shooting rather carelessly and, except in the opinion of those who managed to survive it, without much discrimination.

H. K.

Households First, Houses Afterwards

Because she foresaw and dreaded the pauperization of the individual by the State, *Octavia Hill* (CONSTABLE, 15/-) was a prophet for our day as well as a pioneer in her own. And because Miss E. MOBERLY BELL notes that in the course of her great Victorian housing reforms *Octavia* worked always for and through individuals and respected the independence of the poor, the author of this very able and winning biography brings home a much-needed lesson to her heroine's less human successors. Obviously those who in housing, in education, in medical care cannot, or will not, pay the piper, automatically abandon the right to call the tune. *Octavia's* courageous acceptance of gruelling (and, in terms of cash, unremunerative) work; the radiance of her simple home life and her vivid sense of the fun of standing on your own feet, inevitably kindled the poor tenants of her "courts" to emulation and is told here for the masterpiece of spiritual adventurousness it is. In tracing the sources of this spirituality, the author is rightly generous to F. D. MAURICE but much less than just to RUSKIN, whose notes in "*Fors*" on OCTAVIA'S "intense effort and noble power" still remain the finest of all tributes to a great though frustrated collaboration.

H. P. E.

Money and the Muses

It is possible to enjoy *Financial Times* (CAPE, 8/6) and yet have a grudge against the author. For really Mr. RONALD FRASER leaves one nothing to say, no complaint to be made, no sigh to be sighed because he did not do something else instead. This paragon of works is an allegory on the theme of the world ill-lost for lucre, but an allegory not didactically pressed home, a laughing take-it-or-leave-it allegory. *Woolacombe* the international banker was the sordid genius in a family of genial and delightful ones. Everyone else in the family played, sang, wrote poetry, composed music or designed houses to perfection: out of the old Academician, their father, came forth all varieties of sweetness. *Woolacombe* the banker alone detested the Muses. *Woolacombe* the banker revered only money—money not to spend, not to squander, not to set to work for the owner's pleasure and well-being, but money only for its own odious, irrational and altogether indefensible sake. The allegory is just and the warning awful—but that is not the cause of our enjoyment. For Mr. FRASER is also a painter of very fine pictures. Words swarm to his pen like bees about a new queen. He is continually giving water-parties like the one in DRYDEN'S essay, but in surroundings

more splendid, rich in decorations, nymphs and goddesses, fine buildings and classical allusions. Really, for all its freakish native humour, it is an odd book to come out of these drab times, and a most welcome one. Europe is closed to visitors, but Mr. FRASER has put together in a little space many of her characteristic splendours and her follies.

J. S.

Review of Two Worlds

The gangster France of finance and politics which banked on the Hun from 1918 onwards and banks on him now: the France, simply France, that loathed the Hun, fought him under every circumstance of treacherous betrayal and will beat him yet—these are the two worlds of *France Still Lives* (DRUMMOND, 6/-). Inside information from Fighting French sources supplements the personal knowledge of an Englishman formerly resident in France; and "MICHAEL'S" story, though necessarily scrappy here and conjectural there, overwhelmingly proves that France's underworld had got more efficaciously on top than is usual in even the best contemporary circles. It is depicted here sabotaging the law and corrupting the Press—and through the Press the intellectuals and proletariat; and it prepared the way so thoroughly for the Nazis that even the strategically important bridge at Pont de l'Arche was built by brown-shirt labour. When France fell, PÉTAIN's dotard vanity was exploited by the same clique; but France was still France, and after the Battle of Britain she herself began to credit this saving truth. Hers is a grim story—for grimness, with a touch of panache, you can hardly beat the fate of the one farmer known to have informed against an Englishman. Yet it has its humours; and even Paris laughs when the students sport a sprig of macaroni tied with a black riband in honour of MUSSOLINI's latest "victory."

H. P. E.

More Candidates for Clink

In *Inspector West Takes Charge* (STANLEY PAUL, 8/6), Mr. JOHN CREASEY introduces a new hero. As the blurb claims, with unaffected dignity, he is "the first crime-author to offer a triumphant triumvirate of central characters." Be that as it may, *Roger West* is a likeable young slop. I find I can lurk in dark corners with him and share the rigours of deduction without wanting to push a pin into him, and that is more than I am prepared to say for many of the lovely young demi-gods whom novelists choose to dress up as policemen. This book is a straight up-and-down thriller. It is generally agreed that in the matter of liquidation SHAKESPEARE had something in *Macbeth*, but give me CREASEY for the steady thudding of superfluous bodies. Three victims went down just before the story opened; I counted at least seven more and gave up the attempt to list the probably destroyed and damaged, while towards the end the Home Guard took a hand in the slaughter, and we all know what that means. Of the plot it is enough to say that there are plenty of good red herrings and that things move swiftly. The C.I.D., by the way, might with reason resent as a reflection on their notions of security the scene on page 135 where a sergeant reads out to *West* on the open line a confidential report on the activities of a hush-hush factory.

Castle Dinas (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6) is less of a romp from morgue to morgue and more of a careful crossword puzzle. It is well worked out and better written than the average in its class. Mr. R. A. J. WALLING's *Telefree* is one of those gifted amateurs who are at once the bane and the comfort of the hard-pressed Yard. He is faced here with the uncommon embarrassment of a large number of candidates for arrest, most of them respectable leaders of

country society, hanging together like leeches, for the corpse had been anything but popular. Mr. WALLING gives an occasional sporting chance for a catch, but I admit I went on guessing to the end, and guessed wrongly.

E. O. D. K.

Secretary of State

An American statesman who was a circuit judge in a rough country when still hardly thirty was many times threatened by swaggering citizens who disliked his firm justice. He found it the safest plan to carry a gun as big as the bully's and to walk right down the middle of the road. That his practice has not changed since he became one of the great figures of world politics is made clear in Mr. HAROLD B. HINTON's study—*Cordell Hull: A Biography* (HURST AND BLACKETT, 12/6). There can be few Americans who have more piqued our interest in England than this sometimes evasive though obviously very powerful and utterly loyal champion of public freedom, but our inquiries will still go unsatisfied, for in this portrait the man himself still eludes one, becoming apparent in his policies and to some extent in his methods, but hardly at all in his emotions. He appears here as the opponent of ultra-nationalism, as the architect of the Good Neighbour policy in Latin America, as the prophet who vainly foretold in the face of tumultuous and sometimes foolish opposition the war-storm ahead, yet one gets the impression that even among his own people CORDELL HULL is something of an enigma. It is significant that although President ROOSEVELT and he have worked together far longer than any similar partners before, no detail of more than formal contact between them is related in these pages. For English readers the earlier part of this very well-written book has the added charm of a far-away country not very different from that of *Huck Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*—the land of log-rafts on big rivers, of local smouldering feuds, and of huge half-explored regions close at hand.

C. C. P.





"Sorry I can't stop now—I've got to go and change my sweet-coupons."

Shooting the Line

"AERIAL combats in our day," said the old-timer, "were comparatively friendly affairs. We often arranged matches and would wager our whisky against their champagne on the result. Did I ever tell you of the epic battle between Lieutenant-General Sir Claud Higginbottom and Baron Otto von Hohenstauffen?"

"Some other time," said the Flight-Commander. "We were going to discuss——"

"A gentleman of the old school," proceeded the old-timer, "Sir Claud Higginbottom believed he ought to be able to do himself any duty those under him had to perform. So when he discovered one day that he had an R.F.C. Squadron in his corps he determined to learn to fly. But Sir Claud's first solo is another story."

"Yes, old boy, but——"

"I was telling you of his battle with the Baron. When the Corps Commander stepped out of the wreckage of his R.E.8 on completing his first solo flight he stated that he wished to take

part in aerial combat. Our Squadron Commander was quite willing, as Sir Claud was capable of taking off and the question of his landing again would probably not arise. But we all wished to give the old boy a sporting contest, and when we came to choose an opponent for him there could be no doubt that Faceache was the man.

"Baron Otto von Hohenstauffen, or Faceache as he was known to us, was a familiar figure on the Western front. One of the most intrepid and certainly the least skilful of Germany's fighter pilots, he never refused combat and invariably began it with his personal version of the Immelman turn. Applying his rudder early and with great vigour he would soon get his Albatross into a spin, from which he recovered by taking his hands and feet off the controls, while he glared balefully at the image of his opponent reflected in one of the mirrors which adorned his cockpit.

"It was an understood thing in our squadron that no one was on any

account to bring the Baron down, but some of our pilots had come close enough to see his beetling brows and purple cheeks reflected in octuplicate. Hence his soubriquet of Faceache. The mirrors were a personal invention of the Baron's, designed to give him at the same time and at any angle a view of his opponent and of his airspeed indicator.

"The Germans on their side were at that time under strict orders not to shoot, bomb, shell or otherwise dispose of members of the British General Staff, but it was felt that Baron Otto von Hohenstauffen could safely be trusted to do no harm. So the contest was arranged for 3 P.M. at 5,000 feet, over square L.51,06.

"The combatants were not told that a match had been arranged, but were advised where they were likely to find a formidable enemy pilot at 1500 hours. Each of them did himself well at lunch and the General was persuaded without difficulty to help himself to his own rum-punch. But Lieutenant-General

Sir Claud Higginbottam's rum-punch is another story.

"Our squadron joined our opposite numbers in the dress-circle at 7,000 feet in good time. We saw the two antagonists heading for each other at 5,000 feet as straight and level as they could manage to fly, and for a moment we feared a collision. But at duelling distance the Baron began his personal version of the Immelman turn.

"Ha! The fellow's manoeuvring," ejaculated Sir Claud as he saw von Faceache spinning down. 'They told me he was pretty hot.' And he dived down in pursuit.

"Catching up the Baron as he came out of the spin, Lieutenant-General Sir Claud Higginbottam was not in the least disconcerted to see the gross Hohenstauffen features reflected in octuplicate. 'D— good rum-punch,' he observed. 'Now what did those pilot johnnies tell me? Shoot when you see the whites of his eyes. Now which is the centre pair of sixteen whites of eyes?'

"While he thus cogitated, the Baron swerved to the right. Lieutenant-General Sir Claud Higginbottam had only to turn to the right and the victory was his. But our Corps Commander had his limitations. Capable under favourable circumstances of changing direction left, a turn to the right was beyond him. So he began his one manoeuvre of powerful left rudder and full opposite aileron. While the R.E.8 slowly backed the 270 degrees required, Faceache got out of his difficulties. It was the Baron's turn to pursue. But the General had so much skid on his turn that he presented a difficult target. Faceache fired again and again without result. And now Sir Claud, looking round to see his opponent, relinquished his hold of the control column. The R.E.8, freed from the opposite aileron, turned more rapidly and began to bank to the left. The General clutched the control column and pulled it back. His turn became a fast one and he was once more in pursuit.

"It was clear that matters were approaching a climax. The champions were warming up. At the same time the Baron tried once more his personal version of the Immelman turn, and the General attempted to turn to the right. It was the Albatross that spun first, but the R.E.8 was spinning down a moment later.

"Lieutenant-General Sir Claud Higginbottam had heard of the spinning nose-dive, but he did not for a moment imagine that he was an active participant in the manoeuvre. A rotary movement of the field of view

was not entirely unfamiliar to him. 'That rum-punch was strong,' he muttered. 'Recovery drill!'

"Lieutenant-General Sir Claud Higginbottam's recovery drill is another story. But in brief his theory was that when the room began to rotate the best procedure to adopt was to sit bolt upright with the heels below the seat of the trousers and toes on the floor, while beating his knees with his fists alternately in marching rhythm. To do this he had to take his feet and hands from the controls, and the R.E.8, an inherently stable machine, came out of the spin.

"It's worked again," said the General with great satisfaction. The Albatross came out of its spin at the same time with the R.E.8 behind it. With the Higginbottam smile that many a tiger in the jungles of India has cause to remember, the General pulled the trigger.

"But at the same time he pulled the control-column also.

"Himmel," muttered Faceache, 'he is an ace of aces. He is looping the loop. But I am a junker, a Prussian aristocrat. I too the loop will loop!'

"Lieutenant-General Sir Claud Higginbottam was disappointed to lose the horizon. 'That punch was stronger than I thought,' he murmured. 'Recovery drill again!' As the R.E.8 approached the top of the loop, the field-boots left the rudder, the heavy hands relinquished the control-column.

"Donnerundblitzen!" gasped Faceache. 'He is flying upside-down. But what an effete Englishman can do, that a German officer can accomplish. I too inverted flight will endeavour to perform!'

"We watched with growing excitement the concluding stages of the contest. Each plane continued flying upside-down slowly losing height in wide circles. For neither pilot had hand or foot on the controls and the engine torque kept them turning slowly to the left. The General, with purple cheeks growing purpler, the strain on his straps prodigious, was patiently proceeding with his recovery drill, while the Baron, aware that he was upside-down, was using every part of his body that he could move to keep himself in his cockpit.

"As the two planes kept circling and crossing and recrossing the lines, it became clear to us that the issue depended on which side of the lines they would crash. As there was no wind the odds were even.

"They crashed in no-man's land, so the battle was a draw. Each emerged undamaged but dizzy. Each made off in the wrong direction.

"But no harm was done. We dropped Faceache by parachute on his aerodrome that evening with a case of whisky. Our Corps Commander was restored to us with a case of champagne.

"A nice wine for ladies," said Lieutenant-General Sir Claud Higginbottam. 'But try my rum-punch. Do you remember the ingredients?'

o o

From H.M. Ship

DEAR WIFE,—Another parcel has arrived I am glad to say but as it is marked Number Five and the only other parcel I have had was marked Number One I hope the missing three will turn up before long. Leading Seaman Potts says his wife puts the wrong numbers on parcels in order to make him think she is sending more than she really sends. That is to say she will send three parcels and number them One Three and Five so he will imagine Two and Four have gone adrift. She thinks this will make him extra grateful for her thoughtfulness but even if he believed her which he does not he would still feel upset to think of those parcels going adrift so I do not think Mrs. Potts is half as thoughtful as she supposes. Mind you Potts is only guessing about all this but he is so well aware of what Mrs. Potts will do that it is not really guessing at all. Potts says it is ridiculous to say you can never tell what a woman will do next. He says they work on a system same as anybody else only their system is just the opposite to what you might expect so if you take care to figure things out backwards you can always follow their arguments. This is just what Potts says so there is no need for you to get angry my dear. I would never suggest that I could tell what was coming next. Everything is always a delightful surprise to me. I have always noticed that ignorant people like myself keep a lot cheerfuller than the clever ones like Potts who know only too well what causes everything and another thing I have noticed is that we can pick better wives. This is a pretty compliment for you if ever I hear one so save this letter up and have a good look at it once in a while. I have just had a good look at it myself and it seems to me that I have hinted I picked you out because I was ignorant which is not what I meant exactly but we are asked to save paper and this letter will have to go as it stands.

It is still a nice compliment if you read it as it was meant and don't go

figuring it out backwards the way Potts tries to understand women and for all I know the way Mrs. Potts understands Potts. Well what I started to say was that I do not think you would ever try to number my parcels wrong for the sake of making me thankful when actually it would only upset me. As Potts says there is always a danger in getting too psychological. I have just asked him how to spell that one and his advice on spelling is all right because there is no chance for him to get psychological there though for all I know we may soon have enough psychology lying about to use some of it on spelling and it might just as well be used for that as some of the other things for all the good it seems to do. Potts says they even use psychology on children now which seems scarcely fair when the poor little kids cannot defend themselves. Potts has only one child but he gives it enough psychology to do for ten. I thought at first it was lucky for the kid Potts was at sea most of the time but

now I am not so sure for he gives it extra psychology when he is at home to make up for lost time. Potts has a great problem on hand just now and that is how to keep from thwarting a kid and yet keep from giving in to him at one and the same time. If the kid wants to take your best pipe and combine the two pleasures of destroying your goods and poisoning himself you naturally resist him and this not only saves your pipe and the kid's life but also keeps you from giving in to him. But it also means you are thwarting him which will have a very bad effect it seems. I told Potts there must be some new way of spanking a kid which would please and punish him at the same time but he was horrified at the very word spanking which he says thwarts people worse than anything else. Well I can think of only one other remedy and that would be to hypnotize the kid and make him think your ideas and plans were really his own will-power but I do not like to suggest this to Potts

in case he begins to take up hypnotism. This business of thwarting and giving in reminds me of a problem I read about in an old book of stories where the hero devoted the rest of his life to trying to solve the endless problem of how to stay drunk and remain sober at one and the same time, a problem which nobody has ever really solved. I may say this is not a problem which bothers us in this part of the world for when the canteen on shore ran out of American beer in tins we tried a native shop which sold a funny kind of stuff and though it tasted all right it was not safe to breathe near any kind of flame afterwards for it made an explosive mixture with your breath and when Jones lit a cigarette he nearly blew his throat open and nobody has tried it since. At first it seemed queer to find beer occurring in tins but as Potts pointed out it is just as unnatural to see it standing in a bottle because one's instinct is to get it out of there and put it where it belongs.

Your ever loving JOE.



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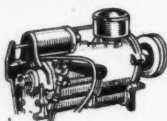
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